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7 February 1975

The Editor
Editor and Publisher
850 Third Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Sir:

In your 1 February 1975 edition I note an advertisement by The New York Times News Service. This advertisement describes the investigative reporting of Mr. Seymour Hersh. It then states that Mr. Hersh's report was "basically confirmed" by me.

In my testimony to the Senate Appropriations Committee on January 15, 1975, I "flatly denied" the principal allegation of that report, i. e., that CIA conducted a "massive illegal domestic intelligence operation." Prior to the report's publication, I had also explained to Mr. Hersh that his story was erroneous.

I thus must take issue with the statement that I "basically confirmed" Mr. Hersh's report. I would hope you might correct this misstatement for your readers and refer them to the full text of my comments on this subject, carried in The New York Times of January 16th, for clarification of the truth behind the grossly misstated allegations in that report.

Sincerely,

/s/ W. E. Colby

W. E. Colby
Director

cc: The Editor
The New York Times

WEC:blp

Original - Addressee 1 - Ea cc addressee 1 - DCI 1 - ER 1 - OLC
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Intuition at work

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Every good investigative reporter has it. But intuition alone isn't enough.

Consider Seymour Hersh of The New York Times. Whose intuition, combined with enterprise and patience, is supported by the vast editorial resources of The Times itself.

With what result? One recent example: Hersh's revelations last December about the C.I.A.'s extensive domestic intelligence activities made worldwide headlines. This is how it happened.

Over a year ago, Hersh received hints from sources in the intelligence community that the C.I.A. deserved more careful scrutiny than it had received from the press or Congress. Acting largely on intuition, Hersh concluded that the C.I.A.—like much of the rest of government—had become concerned with the antiwar movement in the U.S. and that this concern had led to basic—and possibly ominous—changes in the character of the agency's operations.

But Hersh had no details. Only after months of digging and a statement from a key C.I.A. official who knew of the agency's work, and after painstaking cross-checking on Capitol Hill, was Hersh able to confirm his suspicions. Only then did he report that the agency, in direct violation of its charter, had created and maintained files on 10,000 American citizens.

The impact of Hersh's report, now basically confirmed by William E. Colby, director of Central Intelligence, was immediate and dramatic. His revelations were published not only in The New York Times, but simultaneously in the majority of the more than 400 newspapers here and abroad served by The New York Times News Service.

If your intuition, as well as your good editorial sense, tells you that your newspaper should be carrying important investigative reports like Seymour Hersh's, just do this. Call collect to The Times News Service: (212) 556-7087. Ask R. R. Buckingham, editor and general manager, or Richard Long, manager, for full details.

The New York Times News Service

229 West 43d Street

New York, N.Y. 10036

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